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ABSTRACT

The National Literacy Campaign of Zimbabwe was launched in July, 1983. The objectives of the campaign were to enable adults (1) to understand information about themselves, their localities, and their country; and (2) to become effective leaders and productive members of their cooperatives, village committees, management committees, and other organizations to which they might belong. The campaign was aimed at all illiterate people outside formal schools. The campaign was planned by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which made contributions through production of materials, training, and evaluation, and by the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs through its community development workers. A curriculum was developed, and posters and an instructional kit for tutors were created. Classes typically meet three times a week for two hours, and adult learners usually stay 6 to 18 months in their learning groups. Evaluations of the Zimbabwean National Literacy Campaign showed that some progress had been made, but that more women than men were involved, and some ideological corrections should be made. A model is proposed to describe the relationship between a nation's political culture and the literacy promotion strategy that a nation would normally choose. Although the literacy campaign in Zimbabwe had lofty goals, the economic development of the nation may not be ready for universal literacy. However, there is no reason why economic development and literacy development cannot grow together. (KC)

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ADULT LITERACY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE: THE THIRD PHASE OF THE REVOLUTION EXAMINED

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This paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of African Studies, Edmonton, Alberta, May 7-9, 1987.

The author's association with the National Literacy Campaign of Zimbabwe began with a consultancy with the National Literacy Campaign Task Force of the Government of Zimbabwe during May 30 to June 3, 1983. Subsequent visits to Zimbabwe were made by the author to conduct the Seminar on Future Planning of the National Adult Literacy Campaign held at Alvord Training Center, Masvingo during March 5-9, 1984; to direct the First Workshop on Development of Reading Materials for New Readers at Chimanimani during April 25 to May 3, 1985; and to guide the Workshop on Evaluation of Community Development and Training Programs at the National Training Center for Rural Women, Bromley during March 16-27, 1987. All of the author's visits to Zimbabwe, including his participation in a Seminar cum Study Tour by Zimbabwean Literacy and Development Officials to Tanzania to Study the Tanzanian Approach to the Planning and Organization of Post-Literacy Programs during April 17-29, 1986 were supported by the German Foundation for International Development (DSE), Bonn, West Germany. However, the assertions made and opinions expressed in this paper are the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views of the DSE or of other individuals and governmental bodies concerned.

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ADULT LITERACY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE:

THE THIRD PHASE OF THE REVOLUTION EXAMINED

Political independence came to Zimbabwe on April 18, 1980. That day marked the end of the first phase of the revolutionary struggle. The second phase of the revolution would be economic independence. But there was also to be the third phase of the revolution that would seek the emancipation of the mind. The Transitional National Development Plan of the Republic of Zimbabwe published in November 1982 clearly saw literacy to be the instrument for the emancipation of the mind as it said:

> A large proportion of adult Zimbabweans are illiterate or semi-literate. Past administrations showed little interest in eradicating illiteracy. Voluntary groups, notably the Adult Literacy Organization, have made heroic efforts under difficult circumstances to alleviate the problem. As Government views literacy as a right as well as an important instrument for effecting economic and social development, government-sponsored programmes of adult education will relate literacy to work experience and production activities as well as to household concerns such as hygiene and child care. They will be designed to create an awareness among adults of the role they can play for the benefit of society as a whole (1).

The Plan document promised a massive campaign to liquidate illiteracy from among the 2.5 million adult illiterates and semi-literates out of the estimated population of some 7.5 million people at the time of independence.

A Campaign is Launched

The National Literacy Campaign of Zimbabwe was launched by Comrade Prime Minister Robert G. Mugabe on July 16, 1983 as what has come to be known as the Mudzi Declaration on "Literacy for All in Five Years." The Prime Minister called it a historic day.

He called the literacy campaign a campaign "to set the mind free." Freedom, he asserted, meant little unless the people were mentally emancipated; and their mind is not free if it is illiterate and innumerate.

He declared that Zimbabwean adults had the "right to be taught to read, write and calculate." To passion, he added reason:

> The skills to read, write and calculate enable us to participate in the world of thought and innovation, thus availing to us, through the written word, the ideas of others near and far, dead and alive. Through the intellectual interaction, we learn new ideas and become better thinkers and operators in our own time and localities.
> .....
>
> Literacy and numeracy are the first conditions which must be satisfied before real political, economic and cultural emancipation can be attained.... If the adults of the nation are illiterate and innumerate then any hopes the nation has for socio-economic emancipation will take longer to be realized.

The objectives of the campaign as laid down in the Prime Minister's speech were stated simply but elegantly. These were to enable adults:

> 1. To understand information about themselves, their localities and their country; and
>
> 2. To become effective leaders and productive members of their co-operatives, village committees, management committees and any other organizations to which they might belong.

The Prime Minister promised that it would be a true national literacy campaign, "not aiming at some illiterate adults, or many illiterate adults, or most adult illiterates, but at all illiterate people outside the formal school."

He promised new infrastructures that would mobilize the state and the people for the implementation of the literacy campaign: a national coordinating council at the center, followed by provincial coordinating committees, district coordinating committees, and village development committees. At the village level, there would be village development centers where literacy groups would meet. The Prime Minister had conceptualized a literacy campaign for the people, by the people. "Every Government Ministry, non-Government organization, the private sector and indeed all literate people should organize themselves into brigades to fight illiteracy and to wipe it out within the next five years," he exhorted. It is significant to note that much of the work for the campaign was to be "voluntary."

The Ideology and the Technology of the Zimbabwean National Literacy Campaign

The available theory of the literacy campaign identifies two dimensions of ideology and technology as determinants of the success or failure of literacy campaigns (2). The Zimbabwean National Literacy Campaign started on the right ideological foot as the above-quoted prouncements from the Prime Minister should indicate. What happened to the ideological fortunes of the National Literacy Campaign over the years 1983-87 will be discussed later in the paper. We will first talk of the technology of the campaign and of the results achieved by the campaign.

The Technology of the Literacy Campaign

Along the technological dimension, the Zimbabwean

National Literacy Campaign was undoubtedly well planned (3). A great fund of knowledge and experience in literacy promotion in different socio-economic settings had in fact become available during the 1960s and the 1970s. The planners of the Zimbabwean National Literacy Campaign were able to visit literacy campaigns and programs of many different countries in Asia and Africa for some first-hand experience. The head of the reputedly successful adult literacy campaign in Tanzania, Z.P. Mpogolo, spent six months in Harare helping Zimbabwean colleagues in the development and design of strategies for implementation of the campaign to be launched in Zimbabwe.

The planning and administration of the National Literacy Campaign. In 1981, when the idea of literacy promotion for development was first mooted in Zimbabwe, the government decided to assign the task of delivering literacy to adult learners to the national Ministry of Education and Culture. Later, in July 1982, the task was divided between the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Community Development and Women´s Affairs. The Ministry of Education and Culture was to make technical contributions through production of materials, training of District Literacy Coordinators (DLC´s), and evaluation. The Ministry of Community Development and Women´s Affairs, with its community development workers in the field, would be responsible for the training of field-level staff such as Voluntary Literacy Teachers (VLT´s) and for the delivery of literacy instruction to the 2.5 million illiterates and semi-literates in the urban and rural areas of the country. This

division of work between the two ministries would be found later to have fragmented the government's literacy effort and to have seriously hurt the literacy initiative.

The two main agents for the delivery of services. Under the plan, the two main agents for the delivery of services came to be the DLC's and the VLT's. Great hopes were invested particularly in the role of the DLC's. These DLC's were to be recruited from the pool of ex-combatants who will now be asked to exchange their guns and grenades from the days of the struggle for pens and primers to now fight for victories of peace. Those of the ex-combatants who had at least five O-level passes were selected as DLC's. These DLC's would mobilize the illiterate adults to come to learn and to enthuse the literate volunteers to offer themselves as VLT's and come to teach. It has turned out that the politicians and development planners themselves sank deep into complacency, leaving the campaign to the mobilizational capacities of the DLC's and voluntarism of the VLT's.

The structures for people's participation. The Prime Minister in his speech had already promised an infrastructure of councils and committees going from the center to the village. During 1985 and later, as part of decentralization of politics and development, there were further structures established that were vertically integrated. However, these structures have not done much by way of literacy promotion.

The language of literacy. The Mashona constitute 71 percent and the Matebele 16 percent of the total Black population of Zimbabwe. In the earlier stages of the National Literacy Campaign, decisions were made to teach literacy in two vernacular

languages -- Shona, and Ndebele. Literacy in English was to be taught in the last stage of the learning cycle. Later in the years, other languages such as Tonga, Venda, Kalanga, and Shangani have been added.

Curriculum and instructional materials. The curricular objectives include the essential triangle of literacy, functionality and awareness. Scientific analysis of cause and effect, new economic skills, history of political independence, awareness of the exploitation of women, national consciousness, partriotism and commitment to a socialist and egalitarian society are supposed to form the specific content of the curriculum. The instructional materials are an adaptation of Paulo Freire´s approach. A set of forty-four posters provide themes for discussion by adult learners. These posters carry key words both in Shona and Ndebele and are meant to be used in a different sequence for each of the two languages. Most of themes included in the posters are on the subject of struggle against the white minority regime overthrown through a successful struggle by the people. The instructional kit includes: a primer (in Shona or Ndebele), a numeracy workbook (in Shona or Ndebele), a tutor´s guide (in Shona or Ndebele) and a numeracy tutor´s guide (only in English). Primers are distributed free to learners, but they must buy their own exercise books and pencils. These materials are supposed to be followed by functional books some of which have already been written but not yet published.

Training of DLC´s and VLT´s. The training of DLC´s is conducted by the Ministry of Education. It is of four week

duration and is essentially technical in nature, discussing methods of teaching and class organization. The training of VLT's is the responsibility of the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs. The training for VLT's is supposed to be two weeks but exigencies of time and resources have often reduced it to two or three days. Supervision of VTL's by DLC's is inhibited by the fact that travel by DLC's on their motor bikes is limited to 500 kilometers a month and no more than 50 Zimbabwe dollars can be granted as halting allowance each month to a DLC.

The teaching-learning encounter. Classes are taught in whatever places are available from elementary school buildings to under the trees. Classes typically meet 3 times a week for 2 hours each time. There is no pattern to when classes begin and when they end. Adult learners are known to stay anywhere between 6 to 18 months in their learning groups. Three somewhat distinct stages have been talked about: stage,1 of 24 weeks when vernacular literacy and numeracy are introduced; stage,2 of 24 weeks when skills in vernacular literacy and numeracy are strengthened; and stage,3 of 16 weeks when English is introduced as well as some history, geography, hygience and science are taught to bring the adult learner to a level of skills aquisition equivalent to the VII grader. It is not clear if in practice VII grade skills are learned by anyone at all.

Support materials and institutions. There is very little available by way of support materials in print or other media. Follow-up books and reading materials are scarce. Extension materials produced by other development ministries such as the

Ministry of Agriculture, Health or Labor are not directed to the new literate and an excellent opportunity is missed. The government's Peoples Weekly may be the only reasonable reading material in print. Radio 4, which is wholly dedicated to education provides some useful information to adult learners. The Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production has the possibility of becoming a useful support institution for new literates but its role is thus far minimal.

Coverage by the Campaign during 1983-86

One of the plans for national coverage considered during the earliest period of the campaign had, rather optimistically, developed the following projections:

Year	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87
Participants to be covered	200,000	500,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Literacy instructors to be mobilized	10,000	25,000	50,000	50,000

In reality, the figures recently released by the Government of Zimbabwe are as follows:

Year	Total Learners Enrolled	Male	Female	Male/Female Ratio
1983	90,052	13,775	76,277	1:5
1984	117,461	17,423	100,038	1:6
1985	105,203	15,676	89,527	1:6
1986	82,138	13,435	68,703	1:5
TOTAL	394,854	60,309	334,545	1:5

The table below presents figures of tutors trained, ratained and those who withdrew:

Year	Trained	Retained	Withdrew
1983	5,765	4,429	584
1984	7,536	3,250	1,117
1985	10,135	5,867	1,824
1986	6,942	2,199	1,434

Understandably, all those concerned with the campaign are talking about the "loss of momentum" in the campaign and of the need for its revitalization.

Some Evaluations of the Campaign

Some evaluations of the Zimbabwean National Literacy Campaign have since become available and are summarized below.

An evaluation of leaners achievement was conducted by the Ministry of Education during May-June 1985. The Ministry of Education invited all learners who had participated in the campaign to come to be tested during a pre-determined week. Only 35,000 (about 11 per cent of the total cumulative enrollment during 1983-85) showed up. This low level of showing is explained by the fact that the national test competed with the agricultural cycle and a national election. Of those who took the test, 27,000 (some 77 per cent) were declared successful. Learners needed to score 50 per cent marks to be declared successful and most of the 27,000 who passed may have been semi-literate rather than fully literate. Unlike Tanzania, whose national literacy tests provided the model, the Zimbabwe testing

failed to make any mobilizational use of the testing event. The Party took no interest in the testing nor did the local leadership. Indeed, the testing may have spread frustration among those who did take the tests, by sending their certificates late and many to the wrong addresses. Another nation-wide test is planned for 1988.

A study conducted by Ines Grainger (4), found potential for reorientation in both the objectives and processes of the campaign. Literacy, she suggested, had become an affair for women. Men preferred to drink beer rather than attend classes. The program did not seem to meet learners' objectives which were to acquire academic knowledge to enter the formal economy. They did not want functional literacy. Perhaps they could be convinced otherwise but the program as presently run taught neither functionality nor academic literacy effectively. Tutors failed to inspire their learners since they were themselves seen as social and economic failures.

In a deeper political analysis of adult literacy in Zimbabwe, Davison (5) suggests that the regime may have indeed abandoned its policy of "growth with equity" promulgated in the first few years of independence. Naturally, therefore, universalization of adult literacy was no more on its agenda. She suspects also that the power elite in Zimbabwe may not be willing to release women from the cultural (and legal) bondage in which they live and since women are the main beneficiaries of the campaign, the male power establishment may not be too serious in making literacy succeed.

The Ideology of the Literacy Campaign

It is quite clear from the forgoing description and evaluations that the National Literacy Campaign of Zimbabwe has lost momentum and is indeed in need of revitalization, lest it should peter out completely. It can also be asserted that the cause for the present condition of the campaign does not lie in its technology which is more than adequate, but in its ideology which today is less than stimulating. The campaign when it was first launched in July of 1983, did seem to have had the right ideological roots. The language of justification for literacy promotion used in the Prime Minister's speech sounded right for a political elite committed to developing a socialist and egalitarian society. However, the ideological drift from revolution to reform was already there for the perceptive to see. From the advantage of hindsight, the ideological drift should be clear to anyone willing to ponder.

Political Culture and Literacy Strategy: Positing a Theoretical Relationship

Elsewhere, I have proposed a political theory of literacy promotion (6). I have suggested that there is a discernable dialectical relationship between a nation's political culture and the literacy promotion strategy that a nation would normally choose. The following graphic representation of the model delineates these relationships:

Motivational-Developmental Model	...	Planned Development Model	...	Structural-Developmental Model
<>_____		<>		_____ <>
Gradualist	...	Reformist	...	Revolutionary
Organic Growth	..	Growth with Efficiency	..	Growth with Equity
Project Approach to Literacy	...	Program Approach to Literacy	...	Campaign Approach to Literacy

The categories along each continuum in the model above are not discrete but should be seen as interpenetrating into each other. Again, the various points on the parallel continua are not meant to be seen in perfect vertical integration. The model should, nonetheless, help us understand how political cultures, and strategies of development and literacy promotion stand in dialectical relationships among each other, with particular partialities and propensities.

As ideal types, the nations following the motivational-developmental model are basically conservative, even reactionary. They look at growth and change as an organic process, expecting the individual to aspire, get motivated, and to achieve to obtain his or her own share of social goods. Structures, if not neutral, are seen as amenable to change under emergent pressure from the newly motivated. Nations following this model are in no hurry to change their socio-political realities. They believe in gradual social transformations without social disruptions. Literacy is seldom a governmental priority. When it is given a consideration, justifications for literacy promotion are found in

religion, patriotism and productivity. Literacy initiatives typically end up supporting professionalization of labor in the context of functional literacy projects tied to small- and medium-scale economic projects.

At the other end of the continuum are the nations following the structural-developmental model. These are revolutionary societies which may draw strength from varied sources of nationalism, populism or marxism. The focus is on changing structures which determine the rules of the political and economic game. Within the newly established structures citizens are motivated to participate in the new political, social and economic institutions. Typically, these societies claim egalitarian and democratic ideologies of some sort. Their developmental agenda is growth with equity. Literacy is central to their plans for both modernization and democratization and the strategy of literacy promotion is almost always the campaign involving high political passion, and popular mobilization.

Somewhere in the middle of this continuum are societies that can be seen as following the planned development model. These societies as ideal types do want to change structures but wish to keep the dynamics of change under the planners' control. The masses are invited to participate in the implementation of the outcomes planned by the power elite. These societies can be best described as reformist. Growth and equity are sought to be kept in an efficient balance so as not to create economic malaise or social conflict. Both formal education and nonformal education are seen as necessary for promoting modernization and democratization. The favourite strategy of literacy promotion of

such societies seems to be a national literacy program, which may be nation-wide but which is often under bureaucratic control and is lacking in the crusading and combatative spirit of a literacy campaign.

The above model should help us understand the nature and path of the ideological drift in Zimbabwe from the structural-developmental model to the planned development model. With this drift, the concern for growth with equity may have begun to change into growth with efficiency and, quite obviously, the literacy campaign has become a literacy program at best and may be in the danger of fragmenting into a multiplicity of small projects.

The context and history of the ideological drift that we have talked about is sketched below in bare details:

The politics of paradoxical partnership. The elite who came to govern Zimbabwe after their long negotiation sessions at the constitutional conference at Lancaster House during September 10 to December 15, 1979 had in fact surrendered the revolutionary option. They were not doctrinnaire but pragmatists. They had agreed not to dispossess the white settlers and industrialists who then owned more than half of the gross investment in development. These property owners were allowed the time necessary to sell their properties or to keep them as long as they wished. Thus, there developed vested interests on both sides. The white settlers kept their properties and the new governing elite were assured that economic life of the nation will not be disrupted. Whether it was good or bad is not the question for us. The new leaders of Zimbabwe had

to practice the art of the possible. What must be realized, however, is that history is a tought master and that the political compromise brought with it a series of constraints.

The driving forces behind the campaign. Inspite of what the formal prouncements may have said, adult literacy was not, therefore, central to the development strategy of the nation. The leadership was not dealing with a revolutionary situation any more. They may have reasoned thus: The property relations would not be possible to change for a long time. The changes in the superstructure that would have followed were also not in the immediate future. Distributive justice will have to wait. Why then prepare people for a future that did not exist. In reading between the lines, one finds that the justification for literacy presented in the Transitional Development Plan (TDP) is somewhat cold and passionless. More significantly, the development strategy of the TDP is not rooted in the assumption of universal literacy.

There is thus a discontinuity between the language of the TDP and the Prime Minister's speech of July 1983. It could perhaps be suggested that the driving force for the launching of the campaign may not have been endogenous at all -- the national planners were not really convinced about the usefulness of adult literacy. The motivation may have come from outside, from the Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in African Member States held in Harare, Zimbabwe from June 28 to July 3, 1982 and organized by Unesco with the cooperation of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The Harare

Declaration made at the end of the Conference had challenged the African nations:

> to eliminate illiteracy through a vigorous, sustained two-pronged campaign to universalize primary schooling for children and to promote literacy among young people and adults on massive scale (7).

The declaration of the national literacy campaign by Zimbabwe may have been an attempt at being a good host to the Conference and to live up to the expectations of the Declaration that was named after the nation's capital city. It is important to note that the campaign was to be a completely voluntary effort and the Party was spared the responsibility to mobilize the people.

Mobilization in the context of demobilization. There is nothing inherently wrong with a campaign of being voluntary, if voluntarism can be elicited and then sustained through non-monetary incentives and rewards. Indeed, the national literacy crusade in Nicaragua provides an example of how the mobilization to overthrow the Somoza regime was redirected into a new mobilization for the eradication of illiteracy from the country (8). Nothing of the kind was done in Zimbabwe. ZANU (PF) was and remains a spectator to the campaign. The Prime Minister has not spoken again about literacy since his speech that launched the campaign in July 1983.

An interesting and significant fact is often missed by analysts of the Zimbabwe literacy initiative. It is the fact that mobilization for literacy was planned in the general context of a demobilization of the nation. The mobilization for the literacy campaign, basically through DLC's who were all ex-

combatants, might have succeeded, except that there were opposite and stronger pulls in operation at the same time. While mobilization for literacy was to begin, the nation had been through a successful demobilization of the armies that had fought the white Rhodesian regime. The incentives were for change from the underground to the establishment, from the cadre to the functionary, from the guerilla to the career oriented wage earner or shop keeper. No wonder the DLC´s failed to generate a literacy movement and the VLT´s kept on asking for honoraria for the work done.

The nature of the present political culture. Zimbabwe today is caught in the paradox of socialism in partnership with capitalism. There is a duality in the society and the economy and, therefore, in the development strategy. Interest in literacy has fallen between the cracks of the dual strategy of the new Five Year Plan which shows little interest in literacy promotion (9). Understandably -- and here there is no paradox -- the orientaion of the national system of education is toward manpower development for the formal economic sector. Nonformal education and adult literacy are seen as mere frills.

The existing plans, actions, incentives and rewards have socialized the present generation of the young as entrepreneurs and competitors, not as egalitarian cooperators. The recent draught, failure in the Unity talks with John Nkomo, the uncertainties on the border with South Africa all suggest that revolutionary gambles should be avoided.

From Ideological Drift to Political Design

Are their possibilities of going from the ideological drift to serious self-conscious political design for development and literacy promotion? Our answer is in the affirmative. Possibilities can be discussed at two levels: theoretical possibilities and practical possibilities. At the theoretical level, it is possible to develop a mix of socialism and capitalism. The Swedish experience should tell us that it can be done. In Zimbabwe today, it is a practical possibility as well inspite of the fact that the political economy of the country is confounded by racial considerations. It will not be easy considering that a class committed to comfort and consumption has perhaps already emerged. But it can be done.

Coming to the question of campaigning for literacy, the policy makers and planners in Zimbabwe should not let go of the hopes and aspirations of the Mudzi Declaration. Again, it is theoretically possible to run a literacy campaign in a culture which is no more revolutionary but has demobilized and accepted a mix of capitalism and socialism. As we have indicated in our discussion of the model of literacy promotion above, the relationship between political culture, development orientations and choice of literacy strategies is neither uni-directional nor deterministic. It is dialectical and, therefore, mutually definitional. The tail can wag the dog. By conducting a successful adult literacy campaign, the ethos of the political culture can be changed and, within limites, also the social and economic relationships.

It remains a practical possibility for Zimbabwe to conduct

a successful national literacy campaign if the political elite at the highest level show interest and come out openly in favor of the campaign. There is no reason why the Prime Minister can not demand that the Party take the responsibility to mobilize the learners to learn and the teachers to teach. There is no reason why the 320,000 secondary school students and over a 100,000 primary and secondary school teachers in full employment of the government can not be sent to the villages and asked to teach literacy. There is no reason why resources can not be made available to the Ministry of Education and to the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs to implement a national initiave and show results. There is no reason why instructional materials used in the program can not serve multiple functional purposes to change the lives of farmers, workers and housewives in the formal and in the informal sectors of economic development.

Literacy is needed in Zimbabwe. If the bulk of the population which is outside the formal economy have to be more productive, they have to be provided education and this education will have to be nonformal education with adult literacy. How else will the country move out of the economic dualism in which it finds itself? How else will the farmers learn to produce more, drink less, have fewer children, eat nutritious food and follow health education? How else will they learn to be cooperators? How else will they move into politics from outside politics where they are now?

Lessons for Zimbabwe and Elsewhere

Political power in Zimbabwe is in the hands of a group of intelligent, and committed people who have been hardened first by the armed struggle and then by the designs of the enemy within and the enemy without. Their policies remain pro-people. They are seriously committed to creating a society of fairness and freedom. But they have to face up to the fact that the historical compromise made at Lancaster House, has removed some important options. Distributive justice has to wait because what is to be distributed is not immediately available. The continued use of revolutionary rhetoric may mystify people in the short run but can not for ever hide the reformist mode of social transformation. An appropriate change in the language of discourse may indeed clarify development discussion.

The politicians and policy makers in Zimbabwe also need to learn that political will does not grow in a vacuum. It has to be planted in the proper ideological soil and has to be continuously nurtured to be sustained. Related with it is the idea that mobilization is a political process lead by political actors; it is more than bureacratization and inter-departmental coordination.

What needs to be further understood is the fact that Zimbabwe planners may be making the "conventional error" in regard to the role of literacy in development. Literacy is a deprivation that is not directly and immediately felt. The illiterate can not attribute the experience of pain and disadvantage directly to their illiteracy. But that does not mean that the planners themselves should succumb to the social

demand for formal education and forget about literacy which is not part of the social demand but definitely remains a co-requisite of development. Reform needs literacy as much as the revolution. Literacy must yet play an important role to play within the development planning model. If about half the population works within the informal sector of the economy, they need nonformal education with literacy now. That is the only way for them to become participants in the transformation of their culture and their technology and that is the best justification for literacy in Zimbabwe and in all societies in similar set of conditions.

Those unsympathetic to the cause of literacy may be tempted to say: "I told you so!" But it really ain't so. The conclusion is not that literacy is not needed, but that literacy can be neglected even by those who are otherwise well intentioned. We can not, as some have done, bury the issue by saying that literacy is a "cultural phenomenon", implying that some day culture will need it and demand it. But that is mystifying the issue and surrendering responsibility as leaders. Arn't agriculture, family health, fertility, nutrition all cultural phenomena? In all these development sectors, we are under the moral burden to act. We need to work to create new cultural phenomena in which literacy has given all citizens opportunity and independence to act in their own behalf.

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